



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/942,926	08/31/2001	George Malcolm Swift Joynes	3036/50371	8942
7590	07/28/2004		EXAMINER	
CROWELL & MORING, L.L.P. P.O. Box 14300 Washington, DC 20044-4300			JACKSON, ANDRE K	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2856	

DATE MAILED: 07/28/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

(A)

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/942,926	JOYNES, GEORGE MALCOLM SWIFT	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	André K. Jackson	2856	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 May 2004.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ . |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ . |

DETAILED ACTION

1. In view of the Appeal Brief filed on 05/17/24, PROSECUTION IS HEREBY REOPENED. New grounds of rejection are set forth below.

To avoid abandonment of the application, appellant must exercise one of the following two options:

- (1) file a reply under 37 CFR 1.111 (if this Office action is non-final) or a reply under 37 CFR 1.113 (if this Office action is final); or,
- (2) request reinstatement of the appeal.

If reinstatement of the appeal is requested, such request must be accompanied by a supplemental appeal brief, but no new amendments, affidavits (37 CFR 1.130, 1.131 or 1.132) or other evidence are permitted.

See 37 CFR 1.193(b)(2).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bosselaar et al. (WO9525264)

Regarding claim 1, Bosselaar et al. discloses in "Acoustic apparatus for examining a pipeline for leaks" sensing vibrations induced in a fluid system (Abstract); segments the sensed vibrations into two spectral frequencies (Abstract) and comparing the amplitudes of the frequencies with predetermined leak condition (Abstract, Column 2,3).

Regarding claim 7, Bosselaar et al. disclose sensing vibrations induced in a fluid system (Abstract); segmenting the sensed vibrations into two spectral frequencies (Abstract) and a comparator (6) for comparing the amplitudes of the frequencies with predetermined values to determine a leak condition (Abstract Columns 2,3).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
5. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bosselaar et al. in view of Kiewit.

Regarding claim 8 Bosselaar et al. do not disclose where the sensor is known to include a piezo-electric material. However, Kiewit discloses where the sensor is known to include a piezo-electric material (Column 2). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Bosselaar et al. to include where the sensor is known to include a piezo-electric material. By

adding this feature the apparatus would be able to precisely detect the leakage.

6. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bosselaar et al. in view of Kiewit and in further view of Braathen et al.

Regarding claim 9, Bosselaar et al. do not disclose a sensor that includes a PVDF film. However, Braathen et al. disclose a sensor that includes a PVDF film (Column 1, lines 32 and 33). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Bosselaar et al. to include where a sensor includes a PVDF film since using the film makes for an easier application to the pipe.

7. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bosselaar et al. in view Kiewit and in further view of Roy (GB 2335041).

Regarding claim 10, Bosselaar et al. do not disclose where the sensor is a strain gauge, geophone or a hydrophone. However, Roy discloses a sensor, which is a hydrophone (26). Therefore, to modify Bosselaar et al. to include a hydrophone would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention since the use of various acoustic devices is well known in the art.

8. Claims 1-3 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kiewit in view of Jordan.

Regarding claim 1, Kiewit discloses sensing vibrations induced in a fluid system (56); segments the sensed vibrations into two frequencies (Abstract, Figure 3). Kiewit et al. disclose using amplitudes at a frequency and a ratio of amplitudes to determine a leak and compares the amplitudes of the frequencies with predetermined leak condition (Abstract, Column 5, Column 3 and Column 2). Kiewit does not explicitly disclose separating the vibrations into two frequency spectrums. However, Jordan discloses in "Apparatus and method for detecting ultrasonic waves propagated from within a selected distance" separating the vibrations into two frequency spectrums (Page 1, lines 3-5) and comparing the amplitude of one band to another (Page 2, lines 9-11; page 3, lines 26-31).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Kiewit to include separating the vibrations into two frequency spectrums. By adding this feature the apparatus would be able to precisely distinguish the leak in the pipe.

Regarding claim 2, Kiewit discloses where attaching a sensor to the fluid system to obtain data indicative of fluid flow (Figure 1).

Regarding claim 3, Kiewit discloses where the sensor is known to include a piezo-electric material (Column 2).

Regarding claim 13, Kiewit discloses one sensor mounted on the exterior of a pipe (Figure 1) for sensing vibrations induced by fluid flow in the pipe and providing an output of indicative of the vibrations (Columns 3

and 4); segmenting the sensed vibrations into two frequencies (58) and a comparator (processor) for comparing the amplitudes of the frequencies with predetermined values to determine the presence of a leak (Abstract, Column 5, Column 3 and Column 2). Kiewit does not explicitly disclose separating the vibrations into two frequency spectrums. However, Jordan discloses separating the vibrations into two frequency spectrums (Page 1, lines 3-5) and comparing the amplitude of one band to another (Page 2, lines 9-11; page 3, lines 26-31). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Kiewit to include separating the vibrations into two frequency spectrums. By adding this feature the apparatus would be able to precisely distinguish the leak in the pipe.

9. Claims 4 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kiewit in view of Jordan and in further view of Braathen et al.

Regarding claim 4, Kiewit does not disclose a sensor that includes a PVDF film. However, Braathen et al. has a sensor that includes a PVDF film (Column 1, lines 32 and 33). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Kiewit to include a sensor that includes a PVDF film since using the film makes for an easier application to the pipe.

Regarding claim 16, Kiewit does not disclose a sensor that includes a PVDF film. However, Braathen et al. disclose a sensor that includes a PVDF film (Column 1, lines 32 and 33). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Kiewit to include where a sensor includes a PVDF film since using the film makes for an easier application to the pipe.

10. Claims 5 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kiewit in view of Jordan and Braathen et al. and in further view of Roy (GB 2335041).

Regarding claim 5, Kiewit do not disclose whether the sensor is a strain gauge, geophone or a hydrophone. However, Roy discloses "Detecting leaks in pipes" which has a sensor, which is a hydrophone (26). Therefore, to modify Kiewit to include a hydrophone would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention since the use of various acoustic devices is well known in the art.

Regarding claim 17, Kiewit do not disclose whether the sensor is a strain gauge, geophone or a hydrophone. However, Roy discloses a sensor, which is a hydrophone (26). Therefore, to modify Kiewit to include a hydrophone would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention since the use of various acoustic devices is well known in the art.

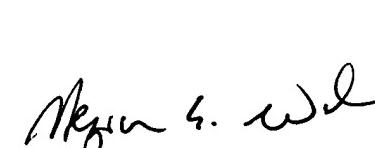
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to André K. Jackson whose telephone number is (571) 272-2196. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Thurs. 7AM-4PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hezron Williams can be reached on (571) 272-2208. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A.J. 

July 23, 2004


HEZRON WILLIAMS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800